



April 16, 1996

TO: Board of Trustee
Atlanta Landmarks

I'm sure all of you have read stories and seen pictures of the fire that struck the Fox in the early hours of Monday morning. Several of you, in fact, visited the theater during that near-disaster and I know all of us had our hearts in our stomachs as the first television coverage showed flames and smoke reaching toward the sky.

Thank God, the theater is alive and well! Atlanta's firefighters did an absolutely superlative job containing the damage and the theater itself showed its spunk by standing against the spread of the flames. I hope you've had a chance to see our open-letter expression of thanks in the April 16th newspaper, not only to Atlanta's Fire Department, but to the whole city for its outpouring of support and concern.

I wanted particularly to tell you of the entire staff's heroic efforts to undertake the unbelievably complex task of putting things back in order and opening a Broadway show just 36 hours later. We'll give you a full report at our May Board meeting, but you can be extraordinarily proud of the way in which everyone performed. The early morning tears turned into relief and sheer determination to fulfill theatrical tradition. We just can't say enough about them.

While reluctant to single out individuals, Ed Neiss credits Joe Patten in particular with once again saving the theater. Joe was awakened by our alarm system and quickly set the rescue efforts in motion.

I also should mention that John Sponski stopped by on his way to work to offer help. He immediately arranged for a set of offices at NationsBank to be made available to our staff, along with necessary equipment, telephones, etc., and we're tremendously indebted to him.

There's a lot of work ahead and we'll give you an update in May, when hopefully we'll have a roof back over our heads and a much better idea of timetables and costs. Right now we're just exceedingly grateful and more optimistic than ever

about the future. If there is a consolation to be found out of such an event, it is that attention to the fire has brought about an even greater recognition of the theater and its historical and current importance to Atlanta. Mayor Campbell called it the "cultural soul of our city." The Atlanta Constitution editorialized that "the show - and the Fox - must go on."

It would be nice if new audiences and fans have been attracted. In any event, we continue our pledge and our devotion to preserve one of the South's greatest treasures and to ever enhance its contribution to the culture of our region.

Sincerely,

Alan Thomas

P.S. With your permission we'll use this as notification of our May Board meeting. It will be held on Tuesday, May 21st at 4:00 P.M. in the Spanish Room at the Fox.

Fox Theater
Simplex Printout Data

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
2:00:14 am	MON 15 APR 96 BALLROOM FLOOR (ILLEGIBLE) SUPERVISORY POINT ABNORMAL
2:11:40 am	MON 15 APR 96 STAGE RIGHT FLOOR 1 P DE LEON ST SUPERVISORY POINT ABNORMAL
2:xx:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 LEVEL =3__ AT MAIN PANEL BY OPERATOR
2:12:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 DOOR HOLDER BYPASS TROUBLE POINT ABNORMAL
2:13:04 am	MON 15 APR 96 TROUBLES ACKNOWLEDGED AT MAIN PANEL
2:24:48 am	MON 15 APR 96 LEVEL =1 AT MAIN PANEL BY OPERATOR 1
4:39:19 am	MON 15 APR 96 ALARM VERIFICATION IN PROGRESS
→ 4:40:04 am	MON 15 APR 96 BAY 9 GROUND FLOOR UTILITY ROOM SMOKE DETECTOR VERIFIED SMOKE ALARM
4:40:11 am	MON 15 APR 96 STAGE RIGHT PASSENGER ELEVATOR SPEAKER CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:13 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 1 SPANISH ROOM SPEAKER CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:14 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 5-1 SE FRONT BASEMENT AREA SPEAKER CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:14 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 8-2 BACKSTAGE BASEMENT AREA SPEAKER CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:15 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 8-2 BACKSTAGE BASEMENT AREA SIGNAL CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:15 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 5-2 NW REAR BASEMENT AREA SIGNAL CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:16 am	MON 15 APR 96 ZONE 5-2 NW REAR BASEMENT AREA SPEAKER CIRCUIT RELAY FAULT TROUBLE
4:40:41 am	MON 15 APR 96 BAY 9 FLOOR 2R PASSENGER ELEV FOYER SMOKE DETECTOR VERIFIED SMOKE ALARM
4:42:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 ALARMS ACKNOWLEDGED AT ANNUNC 3
4:42:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 SYSTEM RESET REQUIRED AT ANNUNC
4:42:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 SYSTEM RESET IN PROGRESS
4:42:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 TROUBLES ACKNOWLEDGED AT ANNUNC 3
4:42:23 am	MON 15 APR 96 BAY 9 FLOOR 1R PASSENGER ELEV FOYER SMOKE DETECTOR VERIFIED SMOKE ALARM
4:42:27 am	MON 15 APR 96 ALARMS ACKNOWLEDGED AT ANNUNC 3
4:43:07 am	MON 15 APR 96 ALARMS PRESENT, SYSTEM RESET ABORTED
4:43:13 am	MON 15 APR 96 SYSTEM RESET REQUESTED AT ANNUNC 3
4:43:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 SYSTEM RESET IN PROGRESS
4:43:xx am	MON 15 APR 96 ALARMS PRESENT, SYSTEM RESET ABORTED

REPORT OF THE PIPE ORGAN COMMITTEE

January 19, 1999

What has Joe Patten done for us lately?

We all know that Joe Patten, a member of the Pipe Organ Committee, was among the handful of leaders of the SAVE THE FOX movement in 1975. And, following the fire on April 15, 1996, Ed Neiss was moved to say that, because Joe had led the firemen to the source of the fire so quickly that it could be extinguished without getting to the Theatre proper, Joe had SAVED THE FOX for the second time!

But what has Joe done for us lately?

He wouldn't want me to tell you about this, but I believe you should know.

It was the night of December 18, 1998, a Friday. Joe was working at his shop when, about 9:30 pm, he got a call from Walt Winn, our organist who was playing for the *Nutcracker*, telling him that the organ console would not go up for the *Nutcracker* intermission--it would not leave its down position below the stage level so that it could rise and be seen while it was being played. Keep in mind here that one of the goals of the Pipe Organ Committee is to educate young people--such as those who attend the *Nutcracker* --in the glories of the King of Instruments.

Joe returned from his shop and, starting at about 10:30pm when the performance was over, he began work.

First in the contactor room, he checked two different sets of fuses using his voltmeter--- 3 in the interlock circuitry and then 6 in the Peter Clark organ life control panel. The system of interlocks does two things: most dramatically, it keeps the organ console from rising too high and falling off its lift and from descending too low and going through the floor; just as importantly, it keeps the organ lift from moving until the door by which the organist enters the console is securely closed.

Once he determined that the fuses were all in good shape, Joe then began checking the interlock system and the relays. He had worked alone up until this time when Herby, one of our maintenance employees, came along and assisted by handing Joe the tools he needed and similar tasks that Joe could not do because he has only 2 hands.

Joe then checked the up relay, the down relay, the picture level relay and the stop relay---as you can see, these represent the four levels to which the organ lift and the organ move when the organ is being used. And then he checked three more big relays which control the phasing of the circuitry--a 3 wire, 220 volt, 3 phase circuit.

Then he came to the drum which, as a part of the interlock system, rotates and has multiple contacts which rub on it. On the drum, the picture level and the up and down levels are adjustable. Before he left for the night, Joe got two pieces of wood and literally sat on top of the drum assembly--highly electrified--and by manually pressing the master and up relays together, he was able to make the console rise. While this narrowed down the problem to the "organ going up"

phase, Joe still did not know the exact problem when he went to bed at 3:30 am Saturday morning.

He began work again about 8 am Saturday morning and, through his efforts, had found the problem---a solder joint which went to the contact that rubbed on the drum--- by the time Walt Winn, the organist, arrived to play for the Saturday matinee performance of the *Nutcracker*. With Walt's help, Joe removed both interlock panels from the drum, cleaned them, polished them, tinned the necessary wires and resoldered the offending joint. After appropriate testing, the organ lift was back in perfect working order and our pipe organ educational efforts could continue with only the one interruption.

The difficulty was caused by the fact that, in 1929, when the organ lift was installed, the joint in question had been soldered as a cold solder joint instead of as a hot solder joint as it should have been--and as it now is.

You say , well somebody else could have done this. The answer is, yes, probably so. Probably Bob Lance had he been there could have done the job. Probably George Miller, the contract person who maintains the pipe organ, could have done the job had he been there.

But nobody else was there and , in all probability, nobody else would have worked till 3:30 am to get the job done quickly so the Might Mo could rise again!

So maybe Joe Patten has done something for us lately.